In the Claims:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions and listings of claims in this application.

1 -21 (cancelled).

22 (new). A multi-analyte assay for determining the presence or absence of analytes in a sample, wherein said assay comprises the following steps:

(a) attaching a plurality of capture reagents to a solid support wherein the capture reagents have physical, chemical, and/or antigenic properties in common;

(b) contacting a test sample with the capture reagents;

(c) incubating the sample and the capture reagents for a time and under conditions to allow the formation of complexes between the capture reagents and analytes;

(d) incubating said complexes with a detection reagent;

(e) measuring the reaction of the sample with each capture reagent and use, as a negative control value, of the lowest of the measured reactions or an average of low reactions; and

(f) evaluating the results of the reaction taking into consideration the negative control value determined in part (e), to determine the presence or absence of the analytes.

23 (new). The method, according to claim 22, wherein the analytes are selected from the group consisting of antibodies and antigens.

24 (new). The method, according to claim 22, wherein the sample is selected from the group consisting of serum, tissue and urine.

25 (new). The method, according to claim 22, wherein the solid support is selected from the group consisting of beads, wells, membranes and microarrays.

26 (new). The assay, according to claim 22, further comprising the step of subtracting from the negative control value a background value representing the reaction between a detection molecule and at least one capture reagent attached to the solid support.

27 (new). A multi-analyte assay for determining the presence or absence of analytes in a sample, wherein said assay comprises the following steps:

(a) mixing a sample with a plurality of capture reagents wherein the capture reagents have physical, chemical, and/or antigenic properties in common;

(b) measuring the reactivity of the sample with each capture reagent;

(c) identifying the least reactive capture reagent as a negative control and;

(d) comparing the reactivity of the sample toward the capture reagents to the sample-specific negative control as determined in step (c) in order to determine the presence or absence of the analytes.

28 (new). The assay, according to claim 27, wherein the analytes are selected from the group consisting of antibodies and antigens.

29 (new). The assay, according to claim 27, wherein the sample is selected from the group consisting of serum, tissue and urine.

30 (new). The assay, according to claim 27, wherein the capture reagent is attached to a solid support selected from the group consisting of beads, wells, membranes and microarrays.

31 (new). The assay, according to claim 27, further comprising the step of subtracting from the negative control value a background value representing the reaction between a detection molecule and at least one capture reagent attached to the solid support.